

§ 151.15

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standards issued by the U.S. Department of Justice, in lieu of the evidence required by paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(b) After reviewing title evidence, the Secretary shall notify the applicant of any liens, encumbrances, or infirmities that the Secretary identified and may seek additional information or action from the applicant needed to address such issues. The Secretary may require the elimination of any such liens, encumbrances, or infirmities prior to acceptance of the land in trust status if the Secretary determines that the liens, encumbrances, or infirmities make title to the land unmarketable.

§ 151.15 How will the Secretary conduct a review of environmental conditions?

(a) The Secretary shall comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (43 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), applicable Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), and Department of the Interior regulations (43 CFR part 46) and guidance. The Secretary's compliance may require preparation of an environmental impact statement, an environmental assessment, a categorical exclusion, or other documentation that satisfies the requirements of NEPA.

(b) The Secretary shall comply with the terms of 602 DM 2, Land Acquisitions: Hazardous Substances Determinations, or its successor policy if replaced or renumbered, so long as such guidance remains in place and binding. If the Secretary approves a request for the acquisition of land in trust status, the Secretary may then require, before formalization of acceptance pursuant to § 151.16, that the applicant provide information updating a prior pre-acquisition environmental site assessment conducted under 602 DM 2.

(1) If no recognized environmental conditions or other environmental issues of concern are identified in the pre-acquisition environmental site assessment or before formalization of acceptance and all other requirements of this section and §§ 151.13 and 151.14 are met, the Secretary shall acquire the land in trust.

(2) If recognized environmental conditions or other environmental issues of concern are identified in the pre-acquisition environmental site assessment or before formalization of acceptance, the Secretary shall notify the applicant and may seek additional information or action from the applicant to address such issues of concern. The Secretary may require the elimination of any such issues of concern prior to the formalization of acceptance.

§ 151.16 How are formalization of acceptance and trust status attained?

(a) The Secretary shall formalize acceptance of land in trust status by signing an instrument of conveyance. The Secretary shall sign the instrument of conveyance after the requirements of §§ 151.13, 151.14, and 151.15 have been met.

(b) The land will attain trust status when the Secretary signs the instrument of conveyance.

(c) The Secretary shall record the deed with LTRO pursuant to part 150 of this chapter.

§ 151.17 What effect does this part have on pending requests and final agency decisions already issued?

(a) Requests pending on January 11, 2024 will continue to be processed under 25 CFR part 151 (revised as of April 1, 2023) unless the applicant requests in writing to proceed under this part.

(1) Upon receipt of such a request, the Secretary shall process the pending application under this part, except for § 151.8(b)(2).

(2) The Secretary shall consider the comments of State and local governments submitted under the notice provisions of 25 CFR part 151 (revised as of April 1, 2023).

(b) This part does not alter decisions of Bureau of Indian Affairs Officials under appeal on January 11, 2024 or final agency decisions made before January 11, 2024.

§ 151.18 Severability.

If any provision of this part, or any application of a provision, is stayed or determined to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions or applications are severable and shall continue in effect.